

A recent editorial in American Medicine calls attention to the fact that the Philadelphia County Medical Society has taken

**PROTECTION IN ORGANIZATION.** steps to so reorganize its constitution and by-laws as to provide for protecting its members in malpractice suits. The value and importance of such a move cannot be overestimated. Mutual protection and work for the common good is the very keynote of organization, and a thoroughly organized medical profession could protect itself and its members at far less cost per capita than any insurance company doing business for revenue only ever can or ever could. If every physician belonged to a county society that was an integral part of a State society, such a solid organization could guarantee to protect all its members against malpractice suits and other blackmailing schemes; for the average malpractice suit is nothing more than legalized blackmail. Let every physician in California take this matter under careful consideration. It is not visionary; it is a practical project and could easily be managed if petty jealousies and trivial spite were laid aside just far enough to enable every practitioner in the State to come into the State Society. Under the reorganization plan the annual dues can be adjusted from year to year, so that the cost per capita would vary with the expenses. Probably at no time would the charge per member exceed five dollars, the amount of the annual dues under the old plan of organization of the State Society.

Organization means protection. In these days of "community of interest" schemes and combines it seems almost an absurdity to call attention to the value of combination and organization. Combine; organize; protect ourselves and each other.

Infection produced in man by contact with animals is a question for research work that has been knocking at the laboratory door for many years, yet **URGENT NEED OF RESEARCH WORK.** has scarcely been admitted for consideration. In a few instances considerable work has been done; yet it is trifling in comparison with what remains to be done. For longer than it is pleasant to think about, the majority of the medical profession seems to have been of the opinion that every diseased condition encountered could be placed in one of the not very numerous classes of diseases or pathological conditions already well understood. Only within very recent years has the possibility of doubt crept into the minds of the men who practice medicine, to the fatal disturbance of this comfortable theory. Next to consolidation, what medicine needs most is a goodly corps of skilled and able men, well paid and substantially supported in the matter of laboratory equipment, to devote their lives to research work.

There is still a possibility that medicine may some day graduate from an Art to a Science.

"Especial attention should be given to the resolutions, etc., published elsewhere of the national conference of the State and Provincial Boards of Health of **SAN FRANCISCO AND THE PLAGUE.** North America, held recently in New Haven, Conn.\* The authorities at San Francisco deserve the severest rebuke for their negligence in the matter of bubonic plague in that city. The various State Boards of Health in the United States are asked to unite in calling upon the Surgeon General of the Marine Hospital and Public Health Service to arrange at the earliest possible date a joint conference for the purpose of eradicating plague from the United States. Since March 8, 1900, there have been 88 cases recorded in California, 15 of this number occurring since September 9, 1902. It is rumored that many other cases have occurred which were not reported. The strange persistence in the policy of concealment on the part of the political and commercial authorities in San Francisco is thus having the result of which we have repeatedly given warning. It is not improbable that cases of plague are occurring in many parts of the West and South. We hope the officers of the Marine Hospital Service will extend their investigations into these sections, and that the policy of publicity and absolute frankness may prevent the appalling calamity that is bound to follow secrecy in these matters."—American Medicine, Nov. 8, 1902.

\*The full text of this report and the resolutions will be found in another part of the Journal.

In the report of the meeting of the State and Provincial Boards of Health, as printed on another page, is stated that the Special Commission, after having been invited to work in the laboratories of the University of California Medical Department, were requested by President Benjamin Ide Wheeler to vacate the premises. This is not the case. Certain bills were pending in the State Legislature at the time which, had they passed, would have made every man connected with the Pathological laboratories of the University subject to a charge of felony.

When this fact was explained to the Commissioners they voluntarily moved to the City Hall and there conducted their investigations with apparatus loaned for the purpose by the Medical Department of the University of California.

President Wheeler did not have any connection with the matter in any way.

The circulation of the Journal is, by no means, to be confined to the members of the State Medical Society. The matter found in this issue furnishes a fair indication of the character of the publication.

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